

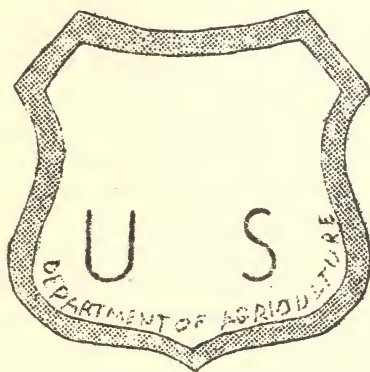
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THE TAR HEEL WASH OFF

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Soil Conservation Service
Washington, D. C.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

DEEP RIVER AREA

HIGH POINT, NORTH CAROLINA



THE STATE CO-ORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

The farmers throughout the North Carolina Piedmont have been quick to realize the importance of the use of improved farming methods and a large percentage of them are now employing these practices in the operation of their farms.

As every one knows, the farmer holds within the "hollow of his hand" the fate of the Nation; that the rich soils must be conserved if this republic is to live. The farmer knows that he must not only feed and clothe himself from the production of the soil, but that he must also produce sufficient food and other necessities to supply the wants of his city neighbors. He also knows that this production cannot be realized from poor, eroded and impoverished soils. Therefore, it is to his best interest to employ every possible means to conserve the soil and maintain its fertility. To this end, the majority of the farmers in the Piedmont region are working today.

Effective erosion control and soil improvement programs are being worked out for the purpose of conserving and enriching the soils, and as a result of these practices, increased yields are being realized, which in turn, mean better living conditions, more money in the pocket of the farmer, and an improvement in the physical appearance of the farm.

Too much cannot be said in commendation of the good work that is being done by the Piedmont farmers. They have attacked the problem of erosion

control with true Spartan courage and a great deal of progress has been made in this work.

Most of the farmers are not confining themselves to any one particular method of attack, but are employing a well co-ordinated system of erosion control which embraces strip cropping, contour tillage, crop rotation, terracing, land retirement, woodland improvement and wildlife development. This is very encouraging, since, after all, the farmer is the key man in the actual development of a system of proper land cultivation. The Government might spend thousands of dollars and employ an army of men in every locality in the country, in an effort to combat erosion and to improve farming conditions, but without the willing co-operation of the farmers, the project would end in dismal failure. Therefore, the responsibility of erosion control and land improvement rests squarely upon the shoulders of the tillers of the soil; and the farmers in the North Carolina Piedmont are to be congratulated upon the whole hearted manner in which they are lending themselves to this important work.

J. H. STALLINGS
State Co-ordinator.

CASE HISTORY OF DOAK FINCH FARM

The farm of Doak Finch, in Randolph County, North Carolina, was one of the most severely eroded farms in the High Point camp area. The principal soils are Helena and Wilkes. The slopes are B, C and D with the C slope predominating, with a greater acreage of D than B slope. The farm consists of 220 acres, with 112 acres in open cultivation, 101 acres in forest and 6 acres in native pasture.

When making an inspection of this farm, prior to writing the agreement, the pasture was given first consideration. A part of this area was covered with pine woods. The open half lay on the D slope and in places, was badly eroded. Mr. Finch agreed to retire this field and seed it to a permanent pasture mixture. The bare and eroded spots were to be mulched with pine boughs and the field protected from grazing until a good sod had been established. The Government agreed to furnish 200 pounds of pasture mixture, while the co-operator furnished 5 tons of lime and 2 tons of 4-8-4 fertilizer. This part of the agreement has been carried out.

A cropping plan was then worked out for the farm, whereby all D slopes and some of the most severely eroded C slopes were to be retired. On this basis, 3 acres were retired to wildlife development, 29 acres to hay and 19 acres to trees, making a total of 51 acres retired from cultivation. This work has been

completed with the exception of a small section yet to be retired to hay.

The remaining 60 acres of cultivated land are to be contour tilled on a 3-year rotation plan. This program calls for approximately 13 acres in rye, 13 acres in corn, 8 acres in tobacco with 2 acres in truck and 24 acres in lespedeza each year. A field of 21 acres has been strip cropped on a three year rotation plan, with approximately 7 acres in corn each year, followed by small grain and lespedeza.

Very little terracing has been done, due to the fact that both Helena and Wilkes soils are very erodible and do not lend themselves well to this particular type of erosion control. One field of 7 acres, situated on a C slope has been terraced, and 6 fields containing a total of 30 acres were top terraced. Outlet ditches and channels have been built at all terrace ends. Three acres have been planted to vines and shrubs and retired for wildlife development.

Mr. Finch is more than pleased with his improved farming methods, and stated that by the practice of crop rotation, strip cropping and land retirement, erosion on his farm has been reduced to a minimum, thereby very materially increasing the value of the land. The tenant also stated that the program has given him two money crops - tobacco and hay - each year, and that two cash crops provide the farmer with a great deal more security than a single crop.

CASE HISTORY OF J. CLAUDE BARBER FARM

A good soil conservation program is being carried out on the 322-acre farm of J. Claude Barber, in Rowan County, North Carolina. Mr. Barber is a progressive farmer and has always been interested in the improvement of general farming practices. He became a cooperator with the Soil Conservation Service on September 30, 1935, and in cooperation with the Service has worked out a complete soil conservation program for his farm.

The soil types of this farm are principally Meckelnburg, Cecil and Iredell. Prior to the SCS agreement, a considerable amount of terracing had been done, and contour tillage was being practiced, but there was no strip cropping and no definite rotation planned to exceed a year at a time. Now, however, a definite rotation system is being carried out, consisting of corn or cotton, small grain and lespedeza in a 3-year rotation. There are approximately 170 acres under cultivation, 69 acres of which are to be terraced and 57 acres strip cropped. Two acres have been retired to trees, 7 acres seeded to permanent pasture mixture, $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres retired to wildlife, and 1 acre has been retired to permanent hay. A timber stand improvement demonstration has been established on 10 acres, and an additional 10 acres have been spot planted. The greater part of this work has already been completed.

Mr. Barber maintains a herd of $3\frac{1}{4}$ dairy cattle, and more than 100 acres of lespedeza and other legumes are being grown. These provide supplementary pasture and hay and are soil conserving crops.

Mr. Barber stated that strip cropping, contour tillage and terracing have greatly reduced erosion on his farm, and has asked that additional fields be surveyed for broad strips. "I realize the value of this method of farming," he said, "and am glad to co-operate in the establishment of all phases of the soil conservation program."

In addition to hay mixture and tree seedlings supplied by the Government, the co-operator furnished manure and mulch for a meadow strip, and the necessary mulch for 2 acres retired to trees.

Mr. Barber owns another farm of 175 acres in this same locality on which a similar program is being worked.

WILDLIFE AND EROSION CONTROL

Wildlife protection and development should be made a part of every farm program. Planting terrace outlets, ditch banks, gullies and other badly eroded areas with suitable cover requires very little additional effort, in the major operations of erosion control. These improvements together with good management of fence rows, hedges and odd corners of fields, will make the entire area a veritable haven for game, song and insectivorous birds.

CASE HISTORY OF P. N. TAYLOR FARM

"You fellows have helped me speed up a program that I had already started," said P. N. Taylor of White Plains, Surry County, North Carolina, in speaking of the Soil Conservation Service and the work done by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The farm program that is being worked out on the Taylor farm is typical of the agreements now in effect throughout the North Carolina Piedmont.

At the time the agreement was signed - October 31, 1935 - Mr. Taylor had approximately 125 acres under cultivation, with 34 acres of protected forest, 29 acres of improved pasture and 12 acres abandoned. He was growing approximately 40 acres of small grain each year, and also 30 acres of tobacco, 30 to 40 acres of corn and about 35 acres of legumes.

Prior to becoming a cooperator, Mr. Taylor was practicing, in a limited way, some improved methods of farming. He is now, however, making a special effort to carry out the plans embodied in his agreement. He has reduced his tobacco crop from 30 to 25 acres. Proper rotation is being practiced on 55 acres, 18 acres of which are to be strip cropped; and all tillable land is now cultivated on the contour. Corn is grown continuously on the creek bottoms, and during the past season, there was a good stand of crimson clover grown on a field from which silage corn had been removed.

In an effort to aid in the control of erosion and to provide a sufficient supply of fence posts and wood for curing his tobacco, 35 acres are now under forest management. An additional 5 acres have been planted to pine and black locust for replacement purposes.

Mr. Taylor was one of the first farmers in the area to make use of the Surry County terracing unit. He employed it for approximately 60 hours terracing, besides having some subsoiling done in a pasture. The camp engineers did the staking for both jobs. After each heavy rain Mr. Taylor sends his tenants over the farm to make an inspection of the terraces and repair any broken places.

Mr. Taylor has gladly borne his share of the expenses involved in working out his farm program. In addition to tree seedlings, hay and gully mixture supplied by the Government, he has furnished brush, straw and manure for mulching, and logs for check dams in gullies; lime and fertilizer for his fields, together with cement with which to build structures at terrace ends; 40 feet of 12-inch terra cotta tile for culverts, and the necessary rock, sand and sod for the building of these structures. And by constant attention, these improvements are kept up to a maximum percentage of usefulness.

A meadow strip on the Taylor farm is still holding, in spite of the heavy January rains, as are the wire basket, log and brush dams built at various places on the farm.

Mr. Taylor maintains a herd of 24 dairy cows and approximately 45 acres of lespedeza and other legumes are grown both for pasture and hay.

Wildlife development and gully control are other important factors in the Taylor farm program, and 2500 coralberry plants have been set in gullies, which serve the dual purpose of furnishing bird food and cover, and of aiding in the control of erosion.

CASE HISTORY OF W. C. WOOTEN FARM

W. C. Wooten of near Statesville, is another of the many progressive farmers in the North Carolina Piedmont. He owns a farm of 262 acres on which the soil types are Cecil and Davidson, with the Cecil type predominating.

Mr. Wooten has approximately 160 acres under cultivation, on the greater part of which a 3-year rotation has been established, consisting of corn or cotton, small grain and lespedeza. Approximately 120 acres have been terraced, 25 acres of which are strip cropped. The terraces were staked by the local camp engineer, and built by the Iredell County Soil Conservation Association terracing unit.

A number of the terraces empty into the woods, and outlet channels and ditches have been constructed at all terrace ends. One masonry flume and three Bermuda sod outlets were built. A part of the cement and sod were furnished by the cooperator, and the Bermuda grass seed was furnished by the camp. Mr. Wooten is very much pleased with both types of channel, but thinks that a good Bermuda sod outlet is just as satisfactory as masonry for waterways. He has improved eight acres of pasture and three acres of land have been retired for a soil improvement demonstration, on which the cooperator furnished 900 pounds of fertilizer and the camp supplied 165 pounds of soil improvement mixture.

Forest management and wildlife development are important factors in the Wooten farm program. Approximately 47 acres are in protected woodland. About 5 acres have been spot planted to trees. Vines and shrubs have been set on the gullied areas of this 5-acre tract for the purpose of controlling the gullies and to provide food and cover for wildlife.

THE MENACE OF FROST ACTION

The upward heaving of frost action which may be seen on any cold winter morning on road banks, gullies and other places where the soil does not have a sufficient cover, is one of the most destructive agencies of our soil. It is not at all uncommon to find particles of soil lifted upward by the ice to a height of four to six inches, in the early morning. Later in the day, when the sun rises and the earth begins to thaw and melt the ice, those soil particles fall back upon the firmer soil below. On embankments and steep slopes, when the ice threads melt, the soil washes down and collects at the bottom of the banks.

Unless such places that are susceptible to frost action are protected, they will soon lose their agricultural and scenic value. Some form of vegetative cover should be provided for the protection of these spots. The most permanent practical protection against this erosion menace, is the establishment of a vegetative cover of legumes, vines or shrubs, with a protective mulch of wood litter

UNITED STATES
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SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
High Point, N. C.

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